



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEDERAL PRISON INMATE PLEADS GUILTY TO POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that an inmate of the United States Medical Center Federal Prison pleaded guilty in federal court today to illegal possession of marijuana.

Marcus John Owens, 34, who is incarcerated at the U.S. Medical Center Federal Prison serving a 100-month sentence for being a felon in possession of a firearm, pleaded guilty before U.S. Magistrate Judge James C. England this morning to the charge contained in a May 6, 2004, federal indictment.

Owens admitted that he ingested a balloon containing marijuana on May 26, 2003, in the visiting room at the federal prison in Springfield. Staff saw **Owens** take the contraband from a bag of Skittles candy and swallow it, Graves explained. **Owens** was placed in a dry cell and defecated the balloon a few days later. Inside the balloon was found .63 grams of marijuana.

Under federal statutes, **Owens** could be subject to a sentence of up to five years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$250,000. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Deputy U.S. Attorney Michael A. Jones. This case was investigated by the Bureau of Prisons Special Investigation Section and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow